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Also, that it brings luck to see a pin with its head towards you, and to pick it up by the head.

To which the Romany added, "If you pass a pin you 'll pass a shilling," — remarking that it was a common saying. And it sounds like one, but I never heard it before.

*Charles G. Leland.*

THE DIALECT OF RAILWAY EMPLOYEES. At the annual meeting of the American Folk-Lore Society, November 28, 1890, was read a letter of an amusing character, from Mr. Walter Learned, of New London, Conn., in which the writer, in a humorous strain, called attention to the peculiar speech of brakemen and train hands, especially as developed on the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad. Mr. Learned remarks:—

"From the elision of the vowels, I am inclined to think the dialect allied to the Hebrew tongue, an hypothesis which would be strengthened by its deficiency in grammatical technicalities. Certainly its strong rhythmical tendencies would point it out as belonging to some primitive tongue. As we hear it, it has manifestly been corrupted by English, yet it materially differs from that language, and must clearly have sprung from some other root than the Anglo-Saxon. It is quite un-American in its constant use of the rising inflection. In this particular, and in certain other minor points, it resembles the dialect of the newsboy. The dialects are clearly not the same, however. While some variation may be noted in its use, the general points of resemblance are such that it constitutes a common tongue all over the land, though spoken with various degrees of purity and fluency. It is quite impossible to represent it in the characters of the English alphabet. It is particularly rich in nasal sounds which are foreign to our tongue, and also contains sounds which are only to be found in some of the 'click' dialects of Africa. I have alluded to its rhythmic character. As heard from the lips of some of the venders of refreshments it becomes almost a chant, and has a barbaric sound which suggests that it may be the survival of some early worship. One syllable is usually prolonged and dwelt upon. Thus, near New Haven you hear, '*A-aem* n chickn *zanditch* jelrols n lunchis!' I have marked the rising inflection. This, I may observe, is invariable at the end of every line. Near Hartford the call is varied to '*Oooranges* and *kunkahs*,' the first syllable very long, the last two very short. It is curious to observe that while ordinarily in this dialect the vowel sounds are slighted, and the general effect is to shorten a word by omitting several of its syllables, yet the contrary is sometimes observed. Thus *Thamesville* becomes *Tha-mes-ville*, with the soft 'th.' There is, I think, connected with this dialect some rude sort of music. The intervals are apparently few; I should say that only the minor third and fifth were used."

The writer remarks that, so far as he has been able to discover, the dialect is employed only by railway employees, and that the manner in which it is acquired are attended with a certain degree of mystery. He observes that it had been his privilege to know intimately a brakeman who was a fluent speaker of this dialect, but that the latter never permitted himself

to use the tongue when off duty. From this the writer concludes that facility in the speech can be acquired only by actual service on one of the railways; and he suggests that the philologist who would take a position as a train-boy, for the purpose of acquiring and elucidating the dialect, would be of essential service to the cause of science.

THE COSTUMES OF AFRICA. — Ethnology has up to the present period been mainly an empiric or at the utmost of an inductive character; for the votaries of ethnologic science were compelled at first to make large collections of implements, dress, weapons, and other objects, before they could think of drawing conclusions upon the ethnic peculiarities of the peoples they were investigating. The conclusions then were drawn from the facts by induction, and also in many instances by a sort of comparative method, which, on account of the great difference in space and time of the nations compared, could but in a few cases be depended upon. The large and well arranged collections now existing in the museums of ethnography allows the modern ethnologist to unite the inductive with the deductive method of his science, that is, he has to combine the empiric facts gained by induction with the *psychologic* moments to be found within every person and people, to discover the *instincts* which have produced in mankind the most appropriate, the best-intentioned, and chastest customs and practices, as well as the queerest, oddest, and apparently nonsensical habits or manners of acting. Ethnology is a science in which we cannot make any experiments as in natural science; this deficiency has to be supplied by something else, and this is the study of the psychology of nations, and of the human individual.

This is the new departure proposed for ethnology by Dr. Heinrich Schurtz, the historiographer of the *throwing-knife* in Central Africa (see Schmeltz's "Archiv"), and developed in the preface to his recent work, "Outline of a Philosophy of Costume, with special regard to the Negro Race," Stuttgart, J. G. Cotta, 1891, 8°, pp. 147 (ten illustrations). The "Outline," he says, is intended to exemplify my deductive method in the domain of ethnology in order to show, by the specialty of *costume*, how the inductive method should be combined with the deductive in obtaining results of permanent value.

To discover the origin of costume and dress is a matter connected with many difficulties, for at the present time there are but few pieces of wardrobe that serve their original purpose. Some were enlarged for motives of modesty or of coquetry, others enlarged or reduced to meet the exigencies of temperature. Nakedness sometimes becomes a token of subjection; complete covering of nobility and high birth. The special features of African dress are very interesting reading. White is the color of mourning with some nations; shells of ostrich-eggs strung up like beads are worn by women of the Herero; black articles are preferred to any others for wearing, especially by the people on the Cameroon and the Kassai.

It is the opinion of the author that modesty is the primary cause of the development of costume, and that a close connection exists between costume and difference in sex. All important changes in sexual life are made